

COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS
AUGUST 24, 2004
CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

The Board convened in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, 6th Floor, Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington. Commissioners Stanton, Pridemore, and Morris, Chair, present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Commissioners conducted the Flag Salute.

BID AWARD 2380

Reconvened a public hearing for Bid Award 2380 – Re-bid Deconstruction/Demolition of 520 NW 179th Street. Mike Westerman, General Services, read a memo recommending that Bid 2380 be awarded to the lowest bidder. There being no public comment, **MOVED** by Stanton to award Bid 2380 to Integrity Excavating and Construction of Battle Ground, Washington, in the total bid amount of \$16,047.30, including Washington State sales tax and to grant authority to the County Administrator to sign all bid-related contracts. Commissioners Morris, Stanton, and Pridemore voted aye. Motion carried. (See Tape 147)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Issue #1: Civil Rights (verbatim)

ERNEST EDSSEL: Good morning, Commissioner. My name is Ernest Edsel, E-d-s-e-l. I represent Mae Williams and Pastor Williams. They are the parents of Lavell Lindsey, who was murdered at the Bliss Road Tavern. They had a meeting with you recently; the meeting was totally unsatisfactory. What they are requesting, and this ties in with today's meeting, is...as you know, the three of you allowed that Bliss Road Tavern to remain doing business there when it was illegally operating there. You had notice from Sheriff Lucas that it was a dangerous bar; however, because that location is surrounded by low income housing – what you would consider white trash – you did nothing about it so a young black man goes there and is murdered. His family is left now with five grandchildren to bring up. The Williams's have had no justice in this county. This county is operated on the basis of a few white elites, as the growth plan will show. Your number one focus is on luxury hotels – raising money for that – and nothing for the white trash, as you consider them, or for minorities in this county. Pastor Williams would like to make a point to you about how your decision on letting that Bliss Road Tavern...has destroyed their family. Thank you.

PASTOR WILLIAMS: We had no justice here. We haven't got any justice. And based on your decision, you hurt my family.

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ALTON MCDONALD: Good Morning, Madame Chair and Council members. For the record my name is Alton McDonald. I am the Vice President for Legal Redress for the National Action Network; the founder and CEO, the Reverend Al Sharpton. As a vice president, we have undertaken the issues in Clark County. There are several issues here at hand and get to understand that the issues have been raised time and time again with Sheriff Lucas and also with the Vancouver Police Chief, but to date nothing has been done. So I am here on behalf of the National Action Network in regards to the issues of racial discrimination, racial profiling, inequity, and the injustice in how African American, Latino, and Asian are treated here in Clark County. We articulated to you [at the] last meeting on the 11th that it is time for change and as citizens of this great nation, also taxpayers, we have a right to be in this country and so we will do whatever it takes to make sure that we, as Americans, get justice for the things that should be just according to law.

As Mr. Williams rightfully stated, his son was a victim of a racial attack. Jason Ferguson was the one who murdered Lavell Lindsey, February 29, 2004, and to date I want the community to know – council members, I want you to know this: when the murder occurred, four people were in the car; the murder occurred at the club; perpetrator Jason Ferguson left the scene. Prior to leaving the scene, three other friends of Jason's got in the car. What did they do? Along the way one person, I understand, tried to cover up the evidence by throwing the knife in the woods and cleaning herself off and wiping away the blood. To date, the only person who has been arrested has been Jason Ferguson. The other three individuals, which I consider accomplices to the crime, were in the car. What is the prosecuting attorney office saying? They are saying that they did nothing wrong. I know if there was an African American man who committed a crime so vicious in nature, who killed a Caucasian American, we would have all four people in the car as accomplices, they would be charged accordingly. We are seeking justice. The National Action Network is seeking justice for the Williams family.

Also, there is another issue I want to bring to the council's attention. We have Deshawn Hakeem Watson, who was arrested for a traffic violation. From a traffic violation, prior to his release he was then later arrested for a murder that occurred back in February of 2003. I began to understand, [tape inaudible] the police department seek a warrant to get his DNA. After his DNA was given, it was disclosed to the family – "Oh, we found DNA on a hat," but on that particular hat there's other [tape inaudible] DNA from someone else. And so the National Action Network takes the position that we believe that the evidence may be something that is conjured up. [It's] still in the investigative stage, but it goes to show how African Americans and Latinos are treated in this particular county. And case in point, for my rationale, [when] Jason Ferguson murdered Lavell Lindsey, his bail was set at \$150,000 for the murder of an African American man. We have a Latino young man, who is still in the Clark County jail [who] was charged with robbing drug dealers, who happened to be Caucasian-American; his bail is set at \$1,000,000. Is there a disparity? Yes there is. The facts speak for themselves. I want to thank

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you for listening and I hope you will do an inquiry in to what is really going on here in Clark County.

The National Action Network takes a position. After we bring it to your attention, we will put it in written form and then if we can't get any form of communication of justice in regards to this particular issue, then we will take the next step. We are working on getting the Reverend Al Sharpton out here to address these issues if need be because we are saying this is part of a marker. Clark County is not a separate entity from the greater United States; it is a part of a marker. It's bonded by the Constitution of this great nation. It is bonded by the Constitution of the State of Washington, where all people's rights ought to be protected and those who believe that they can violate the rights of any citizen in regards to their race, sex, and national origin have something coming.

It is a sad day in America, notably in Clark County, to know that we have people's civil rights and constitutional rights that have been violated. I stand as witness, and I stand as the conveyor of this message, that the National Action Network will take a position to address the issue of civil rights violations; to address the issue of constitutional rights violations. I want to thank you for listening. I want to thank you for your time. And I hope that you do an inquiry in regards to the issues that were raised here this morning by myself, Attorney Ernest, and by the Williams family. Thank you.

Issue #2: City of Battle Ground – Transportation Plan Update

Brian Wolfe, City Attorney for the City of Battle Ground, noted for the record that they delivered the Transportation Plan Update for the Urban Growth Area. He asked the board if they had received a letter from Cara Sahler, dated August 19, 2004, which corrects a misstatement on her representation of the Battle Ground School District's opposition – they really aren't opposed to the UGA.

Morris noted that they had closed public testimony and would not be taking anymore public testimony at the hearing. She said she would introduce the notebooks into the record upon opening the hearing. She asked Mr. Wolfe to repeat his comment about Ms. Sahler.

Wolfe explained that Ms. Sahler is an attorney for Preston Gates & Ellis, who had testified at the previous hearing that the Battle Ground School District opposed Battle Ground's proposal, but endorsed the Commissioner's redraft. Ms. Sahler submitted a letter on August 19 in which she states that she had inaccurately stated that the Battle Ground School District encouraged adoption of the Battle Ground Urban Growth Area as currently proposed.

Morris interjected that the board had not received that particular letter and asked Mr. Wolfe how he had received it.

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Wolfe responded that he received it via fax. He said he would provide a copy to the board.

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CONSENT AGENDA

There being no public comment, **MOVED** by Pridemore to approve items 1 through 13.
Commissioners Morris, Stanton, and Pridemore voted aye. Motion carried. (See Tape 147)

PUBLIC HEARING: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Hearing continued from August 17, 2004. No public comment was taken at this hearing.

[VERBATIM MINUTES TRANSCRIBED BY RIDER & ASSOCIATES – Tapes 144,
145, & 146]

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Betty Sue Morris, Chair

Judie Stanton/s/
Judie Stanton, Commissioner

Craig A. Pridemore/s/
Craig A. Pridemore, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Louise Richards/s/
Clerk of the Board

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